

Nevada 2-1-1, a health and human services help line that connects callers with essential services, began taking calls in Nevada one year ago on February 13, 2006. At launch, it was available in 39 percent of the state. Nevada 2-1-1 has expanded throughout Nevada and is now available to residents in 99% of the state, with extended call center hours daily Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. – Midnight and Saturday and Sunday from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

With the support of more than 20 social service organizations that provide health and human services, Nevada 2-1-1 provides an easy-to-remember telephone number that informs residents and impacts communities by connecting people with free information on important services and volunteer opportunities. It's a vital service that helps people find and give help. Help can be found online as well at [www.nevada211.org](http://www.nevada211.org). Translation services in over 150 dialects are available.

During the first year of operation, marketing was limited, as the focus was on establishing the system in Nevada. Anticipated call volume was 25,000, but actual call volume was more than double that amount. Approximately 60,000 calls were received the first year of service. A major marketing campaign, including television, radio and print media, began in February 2007. An increase in call volume is being seen as a result of this campaign.

Most recently, the 2-1-1 system has been used in conjunction with the simulcast television airing of the documentary "Crystal Darkness" designed to raise awareness about the growing problem of methamphetamine abuse. Viewers were referred to Nevada 2-1-1 at the end of the documentary to seek resources for addiction and recovery help. Over 400 calls were received in the hour after the show.

In conclusion, this system has been a great asset to our citizens who are seeking help in the great maze of health and human services. Funding continues to be a challenge to us, but we do have some stable sources at this point. Our next challenge is to work with the emergency response systems to assist in providing information to the public and to coordinate volunteer efforts to help during disasters. This is an area where federal leadership would be helpful in encouraging these partnerships.